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A Disabled Woman Starts a New Life

Physical rehabilitation and social activities give a disabled woman new hope and opportunities



Photo: Tran Van Tinh, VVAF

“I have thought of death when everything was out of my reach,” says Linh. “But fortunately, the Youth Disabled Club took me out of my prison and unlocked my soul through exchange activities and training which I have never dreamed of.”

Linh was born disabled into a poor farmer family in Vietnam’s Thai Binh province. Her childhood was spent in her bed, and her pets were her only friends. Linh’s father died when she was very young and her family had to struggle living on her mother’s small pension. To help support the family, Linh took a course in embroidery, but she could not find a job due to her disability. Linh became hopeless, spending her days locked in the house and isolated from people.

One day, Linh was visited by Giang, leader of the USAID-supported Thai Binh Disabled Youth Club, who encouraged her to come to a club meeting. Linh was not easy to persuade, and even after she joined the club, Linh said she felt shy and embarrassed. “I [was] very nervous and [did] not know what to say.”

Linh had never had any physical rehabilitation, but the club gave her the opportunity to access USAID-funded treatment at Bach Mai Hospital. There, Linh and other club members received treatment for weak joints and muscles, as well as arm and leg braces.

Linh can now walk and participate in normal daily activities like helping her mother with housework. She is also involved in social activities with other members of the local club and in exchange events with the neighboring Thoi Dai group in Nam Dinh province, which allow her to share her experiences with friends in similar situations. Linh says the club has become a second family to her, and her friends where they no longer feel depressed and lonely.

Though she is not yet employed, Linh feels more confident in herself and hopeful of a better future. “I had thought of death when everything was out of my reach. Even my parents did not believe in my ability,” she said. “But fortunately, the Youth Disabled Club took me out of my prison and unlocked my soul through exchange activities and training which I have never dreamed of. Moreover, regular group meetings have gradually helped me to explore a new world of my life that never existed in the past.”